

National  
Gallery of Art

Film



Spring 19



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Spring 2019 offers digital restorations of classic titles, special events including a live performance by Alloy Orchestra, and several series of archival and contemporary films from around the world. In conjunction with the exhibition *The Life of Animals in Japanese Art*, the Gallery presents Japanese documentaries on animals, including several screenings of the city symphony *Tokyo Waka*. Film series include *A Cuba Compendium*, surveying how Cuba has been and continues to be portrayed and examined through film, including an in-person discussion with Cuban directors Rodrigo and Sebastián Barriuso; a celebration of Walt Whitman on the occasion of his bicentennial; recent restorations of Roberto Rossellini's classic *War Trilogy*; and *New Cinema from Romania*, a series showcasing seven feature length films made since 2017. Other events include an artist's talk by Los Angeles-based artist Janie Geiser, followed by a program of her recent short films; a presentation of Nathaniel Dorsky's 16mm silent *The Arboretum Cycle*; the Washington premieres of *Gray House* and *The Image Book*; a program of films on and about motherhood to celebrate Mother's Day; the recently re-released *Mystery of Picasso*; and more.



## April

6	Sat	2:00	La Religieuse p11
7	Sun	4:00	Rosenwald p12
13	Sat	12:30 2:30	A Cuba Compendium: Tania Libre p25 A Cuba Compendium: Coco Fusco: Recent Videos p26
14	Sun	4:00	Gray House p12
20	Sat	2:00 4:00	A Cuba Compendium: Cuba: Battle of the 10,000,000 p26 A Cuba Compendium: I Am Cuba p27
21	Sun	2:00 4:30	The Mystery of Picasso p13 The Mystery of Picasso p13
27	Sat	2:30	A Cuba Compendium: The Translator p27

Films are shown in the East Building Auditorium, in original formats whenever possible. Seating for all events is on a first-come, first-seated basis unless otherwise noted. Doors open thirty minutes before showtime. For more information, visit [nga.gov/film](http://nga.gov/film), email [film-department@nga.gov](mailto:film-department@nga.gov), or call (202) 842-6799.



# May

4	Sat	3:00	Ciné-concert: Coeur fidèle p13
5	Sun	4:00	Hale County This Morning, This Evening p16
11	Sat	2:00 3:30	Janie Geiser: Artist's Talk p29 Janie Geiser: Double Vision p29
12	Sun	4:00	Mothering Over Time p16
18	Sat	2:00 2:30	Walt Whitman Bicentennial: Manhatta p31 Walt Whitman Bicentennial: Street Scene p31
19	Sun	4:30	Godard's The Image Book p17
25	Sat	12:00 2:30	Rossellini: The War Trilogy: Rome, Open City p37 The Arboretum Cycle of Nathaniel Dorsky p33
26	Sun	2:00	The Baker's Wife p17
27	Mon	12:30 3:30	Rossellini: The War Trilogy: Paisan p38 Rossellini: The War Trilogy: Germany, Year Zero p38

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Tania Libre p25

June

1	Sat	2:00 4:30	New Cinema from Romania: Alice T. p41 New Cinema from Romania: Infinite Football p42
2	Sun	4:00	New Cinema from Romania: One Step Behind the Seraphim p42
8	Sat	2:00	New Cinema from Romania: Marita p43
9	Sun	4:00	New Cinema from Romania: Pororoca p43
13	Thurs	1:00	Tokyo Waka p17
14	Fri	1:00	Tokyo Waka p17
15	Sat	2:00	New Cinema from Romania: Charleston p44
16	Sun	4:00	New Cinema from Romania: Moromete Family: On the Edge of Time p44
21	Fri	12:00	Archival Screening Afternoon p20
22	Sat	1:00	1900 p20
23	Sun	4:00	Horse Beings p20
27	Thurs	1:00	Tokyo Waka p17
28	Fri	1:00	Tokyo Waka p17
29	Sat	2:00 3:00	Brilliant Darkness: Hotaru in the Night p21 Tokyo Waka p17
30	Sun	4:00	Ran p21

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## Special Events

Apr 6 – June 30

### La Religieuse

Washington premiere of the 4K restoration

Sat Apr 6 (2:00)



Based on a Denis Diderot novel about a willfully rebellious young novice, Jacques Rivette's *La Religieuse* (*The Nun*) is a blistering portrayal of life in an eighteenth-century French convent. Forced to take her vows, impressionable Sister Suzanne (Anna Karina) is shunned, mistreated, and exorcised by her community, eventually becoming the plaything of Mother Superior Liselotte Pulver. A tour de force for French New Wave actress Karina, the film (adapted from Rivette's earlier stage version), remains an eloquent and insightful tale about tyranny and intolerance. At the time, the film was banned in France, blocked two times from release by the Minister of Information. (Jacques Rivette, 1966, subtitles, 135 minutes) Restored from the original film negative by L'Immagine Ritrovata under the supervision of Studiocanal and Mrs. Véronique Manniez-Rivette with the support of the Centre National du Cinématographie (CNC), La Cinémathèque Française, and the Franco-American Cultural Fund.

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## Rosenwald

Aviva Kempner in person

Sun Apr 7 (4:00)

*Rosenwald* documents the remarkable collaborations between businessman and philanthropist Julius Rosenwald, author and educator Booker T. Washington, and African American communities in the South. Together they built more than five thousand schools during the Jim Crow era, a time when few African Americans received any public education. In addition, Julius Rosenwald established a fund that awarded grants primarily to talented African American artists and intellectuals. Fellowships were awarded to Marian Anderson, Ralph Bunche, W. E. B. DuBois, Ralph Ellison, Gordon Parks, James Baldwin, and Zora Neale Hurston, among others. (Aviva Kempner, 2015, 95 minutes)

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## Gray House

Washington premiere

Sun Apr 14 (4:00)



A striking synthesis of sound and image in a hybrid documentary/fictional form, *Gray House* by filmmaker Austin Jack Lynch (son of David Lynch) and photographer Matthew Booth is, at times, purposefully mysterious. Shifting between the natural world and architectural spaces, using both real and simulated settings, the film is a meditation on landscape, loss, loneliness, and human need. “A lot of the structure of the film and the specific subject matter of this location [versus] that location evolved in an intuitive way, almost like painting. You move through these environments in a certain way. . . the shrimp boat in Texas, the community in Virginia. . . There was just naturally a world of really interesting complex sound, and so you had to try and create a [soundscape] for the film that was

as immersive as the pictures. The music is composed by Alvin Lucier. His work is structural and predetermined, somewhere between what you think of as music and what you think of as action itself” — Austin Jack Lynch. (Austin Jack Lynch and Matthew Booth, 2017, 75 minutes)

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## The Mystery of Picasso

Washington premiere of the 4K restoration

Sun Apr 21 (2:00 and 4:30)

A new digital restoration of Henri-Georges Clouzot's celebrated *Le mystère Picasso* features the famous artist in the act of painting for the camera. Clouzot, who built a reputation for suspenseful French thrillers like *Le Corbeau* (1943) and *Le salaire de la peur* (1953), invited his friend Pablo Picasso to explore the “mystery” of creation within a documentary format. The resulting film, interestingly, contains many cinematic tricks and surprises. (Henri-Georges Clouzot, 1956, subtitles, 78 minutes)

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## Ciné-concert: Coeur fidèle

Alloy Orchestra in performance

Sat May 4 (3:00)



Jean Epstein's celebrated silent classic — a powerful melodrama set in the midst of old Marseille's piers and pubs — has not only been restored by the Cinémathèque Française, it has also been treated to a new musical score. A primal tale unfolds: young Marie (Gina Manès), in love with handsome dockworker Jean (Léon Mathot), has already been promised to a vile troublemaker, Petit Paul (Edmond Van Daële), who won't let go. *Coeur Fidèle*'s visual beauty is tied to its technical experimentation — a whirling merry-go-round sequence, for example, and expressive use of facial close-ups. A visionary of 1920s cinematic modernism, filmmaker and theorist Jean Epstein often used poetic motifs of water and seaside. The three-person Alloy Orchestra, combining their signature found-object percussion with contemporary electronics, performs their new score on stage. (Jean Epstein, 1923, 90 minutes)





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## Hale County This Morning, This Evening

RaMell Ross in person

Sun May 5 (4:00)



The pleasures of RaMell Ross's *Hale County* unfold in the routine comings and goings of the locals in this low-key corner of Alabama — coincidentally, Hale County was the site for James Agee and Walker Evans's Depression-era *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*. What filmmaker Ross has accomplished, however, is in many ways even more striking than what Agee and Walker achieved in their book. Eighty years after *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, *Hale County This Morning, This Evening* documents contemporary African American life in the region — not in any historical recapping, but in down-to-earth portrayals of the places where people live, play, and work. A photographer and former Georgetown University basketball player, Ross has created an unusual verité study of this Alabama community. "His small DSLR camera isn't there to probe; the role it plays in the film isn't all that different from the ones cameras play in our everyday lives" — Ignatiy Vishnevetsky. The film won a Special Jury Award at the 2018 Sundance Film Festival. (RaMell Ross, 2018, 76 minutes)

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## Mothering Over Time

Sun May 12 (4:00)

An exploration of the institution and vagaries of motherhood, a selection of historic and recent short films by mothers (about mothering) and by children (about their mothers), all of which encompass universal themes of care, gender, authority, community, and identity. Included are the iconic video *Martina's Playhouse* (Peggy Ahwesh, 1989, 20 minutes), "a response to *Pee Wee's Playhouse*, focus[ing] on the girl child, grappling with the fluidity of gender roles as she role-plays with her toys" (Ahwesh), and the classic film *Portrait of Ga* (Margaret Tait, 1952, 5 minutes), filmed on the Orkney Islands, Scotland. Other titles include more recent works such as *Zombie Diaries* (Corin Sworn, 2017, 13 minutes), *Mum's Cards* (Luke Fowler, 2018, 9 minutes), *Mom's Move* (Susan Mogul, 2018, 20 minutes), and *Queen* (Kathryn Elkin, 2019, 13 minutes) among other titles. (Total running time approximately 90 minutes)

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## Godard's *The Image Book*

Sun May 19 (4:30)

The reclusive eighty-eight-year-old Jean-Luc Godard (the only French New Wave director still alive) continues to practice his enigmatic art. In this most recent work, he probes topics that have preoccupied his later years — the state of film aesthetics, the discourse between history, painting, and cinema, and the boundaries between filmmaking and other forms of image making — all of which then shape a broad philosophical inquiry into the state of the modern world. "Godard pieces together fragments, clips them from some of the greatest films of the past, then digitally alters, bleaches, and washes them, all in the service of reflecting on what he sees and what he makes of the dissonance that surrounds him" — Piers Handling. (Jean-Luc Godard, 2018, subtitles, 90 minutes)

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## The Baker's Wife

Washington premiere of the 4K restoration

Sun May 26 (2:00)



The books of the popular Provençal writer Jean Giono were a favorite source of material for filmmaker Marcel Pagnol in the 1930s. *The Baker's Wife* (*La femme du boulanger*), arguably Pagnol's best work, has now been treated to a 4K restoration. The incomparable Raimu stars as the local baker who is devastated when his pretty young wife (Ginette Leclerc) is attracted to a shepherd and leaves the village. Heartbroken, Raimu can no longer bake his famous bread, but luckily the villagers — distressed over the loss of their bread — make plans to lure the wife back to the bakery. (Marcel Pagnol, 1938, subtitles, 133 minutes)

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## Tokyo Waka

Thurs Jun 13 and 27 (1:00)

Fri Jun 14 and 28 (1:00)

Sat Jun 29 (3:00)

A poetic city symphony, *Tokyo Waka* brings the Japanese capital to life through a focus on the city's enormous crow population and its relationship with the humans who also happen to live there. There are many stakeholders in this drama: longtime urban dwellers who view the birds as feral fauna and troublesome invaders, locals who have effectively adjusted to the presence of the big birds, scientists who study them, artists who portray them, Shinto and Buddhist



priests who respect them, and lovers of nature who simply enjoy coexisting with the ancient and adaptable *Corvus macrorhynchos*. “Sensually as well as philosophically, *Tokyo Waka* is attuned to the textures of everyday life” — Mark Jenkins. *Shown in conjunction with the exhibition* The Life of Animals in Japanese Art. (John Haptas and Kristine Samuelson, 2012, 60 minutes)

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### Archival Screening Afternoon

Fri Jun 21 (12:00)

A collaboration between the Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA) and the American Library Association Film & Media Roundtable, Archival Screening Afternoon is a celebrated annual event taking place this year in Washington. AMIA members submit rare treasures from their film collections that might include news clips, home movies, travelogues, commercials, music performances, restored classics, experimental works, and more. Archival gems from the sublime to the sidesplitting are always part of this special “best of” program. (Total running time approximately 120 minutes). *With special thanks to Library of Congress Motion Picture Division.*

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### 1900

Washington premiere of the 4K restoration

Sat Jun 22 (1:00)

Originally released in the United States in a condensed version, this is the complete uncut release of Bernardo Bertolucci's masterful 1900, screened in two parts as the director intended. The film opens with Giuseppe Pellizza da Volpedo's large canvas *Il Quarto Stato*, painted in 1901 and now a symbol for progressive twentieth-century values. Two characters, Alfredo (Robert De Niro) and Olmo (Gérard Depardieu), signify the fundamental conflict of capitalism — the landed elite vs. the working class — with Burt Lancaster memorably playing the *padrone*, thus linking 1900 thematically to *Il Gattopardo*. Vittorio Storaro's cinematography and Ennio Morricone's music create a spectacular milieu. (Bernardo Bertolucci, 1976, 320 minutes with intermission)

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### Horse Beings

Sun Jun 23 (4:00)



Before the modernization of Japan, horses were not only useful laborers, they were also often considered members of families and

even objects of worship. A new documentary on vanishing horse culture and the deep connections between human beings and horses that persist in northern Japan, *Horse Beings (Uma arite)* depicts entrenched customs, time-honored routines, religious traditions, and even the local myth of *Oshirasama*, the story of a girl who married her horse. “I observed remnants of this way of life when I visited. . . . People still live in a severe but beautiful world, a world of faith surrounded by the deep green mountains. I hope this film reaches many people and presents another aspect of Japan for discovery” — Ryohei Sasatani. *Shown in conjunction with the exhibition* The Life of Animals in Japanese Art. (Ryohei Sasatani, 2018, subtitles, 130 minutes) *Special thanks to Marty Gross.*

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### Brilliant Darkness: Hotaru in the Night

Sat Jun 29 (2:00)

*Brilliant Darkness* explores the vital role that darkness plays in the cycle of life (and the damaging consequences of the ongoing erosion of truly black nights) through a study of firefly habitats in Japan and the United States. Firefly populations have been declining as artificial lights have increasingly disrupted their “languages of light.” The film features artists and scientists who are working to better understand firefly flash patterns and how these interesting insects have adapted to urban settings. Among the experts included in the film are Rei Ohara, Nobuyoshi Ohba, Marc Branham, James Lloyd, and James Karl Fischer. Following a short documentary essay, the second half of the film consists of quiet scenes of fireflies in their habitats shown in sequence. *Shown in conjunction with the exhibition* The Life of Animals in Japanese Art. (Emily Driscoll, 2015, 35 minutes) *Special thanks to Marty Gross.*

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### Ran

Sun Jun 30 (4:00)

“Resting after a wild boar hunt among spectacular green mountainscapes, daimyo Tatsuya Nakadaï decides to divide his domain among his three sons, instructing them with a parable: individually, three arrows can easily be broken; together, they are strong. . . . A decade-long dream (he had storyboarded the entire film in his own watercolors), Akira Kurosawa's adaptation of Shakespeare's *King Lear* proved the Japanese master's flair for epic sweep and stylistic innovation was undimmed at the age of seventy-five, the ‘culmination’ of his career. Clarified Kurosawa, ‘I said culmination, not conclusion.’ Four Oscar nominations, including Best Director, Cinematography, and Art Direction, with Emi Wada winning the award for her dazzling costumes” — Film Forum. *Shown in conjunction with the exhibition* The Life of Animals in Japanese Art. (Akira Kurosawa, 1985, subtitles, 4K DCP restoration, 162 minutes)







## A Cuba Compendium

Apr 13 – 27

This anthology of new and old cinematic interpretations includes a compelling variety of ideas, approaches, styles, and understandings concerning the great Caribbean landmass just off the southern coast of the United States. Inspiring everything from an exuberant love letter to a fictional foray to an essayistic tract, the enigmatic island nation of Cuba continues to fascinate artistic sensibilities both within and beyond its borders.

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### Tania Libre

Washington premiere

Sat Apr 13 (12:30)



This past December, Cuban artist Tania Bruguera (whose work was recently commissioned for Turbine Hall at the Tate Modern in London) was arrested multiple times in Havana for protesting Decree 349, a judicial act requiring artists in Cuba to register with the authorities before practicing and exhibiting their work. Detained numerous times before, Bruguera continues unabashedly to encourage debate over the Cuban government's restrictions, using participatory public performance as her tool. An exploration of civil

liberties, art practice, and resistance, *Tania Libre* is primarily told as a conversation between Bruguera and American psychiatrist Dr. Frank Ochberg, an expert in the field of PTSD and Stockholm Syndrome. A well-known American artist and filmmaker who frequently probes censorship and authority, Lynn Hershman Leeson starts to unpack the terms of freedom and liberty for all cultural practitioners. (Lynn Hershman Leeson, 2016, 73 minutes)

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### Coco Fusco: Recent Videos

Sat Apr 13 (2:30)



Internationally acclaimed Cuban American artist Coco Fusco uses time-based media such as performance and video to question cultural assumptions and foreground unspoken biases around gender, race, class, and authority. Three of her recent video portraits focus on Cuban artists whose earlier calls for political reform on the island are still relevant today. *La botella al mar de María Elena* (*The Message in a Bottle from María Elena*) focuses on the case of Cuban poet María Elena Cruz Varela, whose 1991 treatise *The Declaration of the Cuban Intellectuals* was met with overwhelming force and censorship by the government. *The Art of Intervention: The Performances of JuanSí González* explores the groundbreaking street performances of Cuban artist JuanSí González from the 1980s via early documentation and discussion with the artist about relational aesthetics, freedom, and liberty. Finally, *Vivir en junio con la lengua afuera* (*To Live in June with Your Tongue Hanging Out*) is an homage to Cuban dissident poet Reinaldo Arenas (1943–1990) told through a recent recitation and discussion of his poem “El Central: Introduction to the Symbol of Faith,” written in 1970. (Total running time 102 minutes)

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### Cuba: Battle of the 10,000,000

Sat Apr 20 (2:00)

The famously reclusive French film essayist Chris Marker (1921–2012) traveled to Cuba in 1970 to document repercussions from Fidel Castro’s plea to his people for a massive harvest of ten million tons of sugarcane. Under a mid-1960s Cuban-Soviet economic agreement, Cuba was to become the sugar bowl of the Communist world by increasing sugar production to 10 million metric tons a year by 1970. (The most the country had ever produced before was 7.2 million tons in 1952.) Marker’s rarely seen hour-long *Cuba: La bataille des dix millions* is a thoughtfully observed look at communism’s

impact on the country, made with obvious regard for the island’s farm workers. *Special thanks to James Schneider*. (Chris Marker, 1971, subtitles, 16mm, 58 minutes)

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### I Am Cuba

Washington premiere of the 4K restoration

Sat Apr 20 (4:00)



Mikhail Kalatozov’s 1960s masterpiece, recently treated to a 4K restoration, links four poetic vignettes written in part by Yevgeny Yevtushenko and photographed in stunning high-contrast black and white by Soviet cinematographer Sergei Urusevsky. The narrative conjures the island’s warm and colorful ambience, starting with a lavishly choreographed Havana episode, then moving on to a sugarcane ranch where the owner loses his land to a multinational. In the next section, a student demonstration on a university campus recalls *Battleship Potemkin*’s Odessa steps sequence, and in the final episode a peasant in Santiago de Cuba Province joins the revolution when his home is burned. “Kalatozov and Urusevsky turned the newly Communist Cuba into a lush playground where they could experiment with wide-angle lenses, whooshing camera moves, and towering crane shots held for minutes at a time” — Scott Tobias. (Mikhail Kalatozov, 1964, subtitles, 140 minutes)

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### The Translator

Rodrigo and Sebastián Barriuso in person

Sat Apr 27 (2:30)

Set in Havana in the late 1980s, *The Translator*’s central character, a professor of Russian literature teaching in Havana, is assigned, out of the blue, to work in a hospital as translator for a group of young radiation victims from Chernobyl. His new role not only complicates his emotional life, it also destabilizes his relationships with friends and family. Mixing documentary elements with a fictional tale, *The Translator* (*Un Traductor*) catches a critical historical moment when Cuba’s economy was failing, unemployment was rife, and the country’s citizens were beginning to feel more insulated than ever. “The Barriusos’ film addresses a specific set of events, but as it unfolds at the intersection of socialist ideals, economic realities, and personal ambitions, it’s a timeless portrait of what it means to be a cog in the wheel of a single-party regime” — Sheri Linden. (Rodrigo Barriuso and Sebastián Barriuso, 2018, subtitles, 107 minutes)



## Janie Geiser

May 11

The Gallery welcomes award-winning Los Angeles-based filmmaker and visual artist Janie Geiser to introduce a program of her recent films and discuss her collaborations with other artists, including puppeteers and sound designers.

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### Janie Geiser: Artist's Talk

Sat May 11 (2:00)

A multidisciplinary artist whose practice includes performance, film, installation, puppetry, and painting, Janie Geiser's internationally recognized films are known for their recontextualization of abandoned images and objects, the embrace of artifice, and a sense of suspended time. In this illustrated talk, Geiser explores her most recent films and performances with an emphasis on her collaborative processes and methodologies. "There's so much to unveil in Geiser's images, her complex language is like a vast manual of instructions of the unconscious, playful images with a particular voice, layers and layers of different dialogues" — José Sarmiento Hinojosa, *Desistfim*. (Approximately 60 minutes)

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### Double Vision: Recent Shorts

Janie Geiser in person

Sat May 11 (3:30)

Developing her own cinematic language with collage and sound and the use of standard cinematic devices such as the iris and the wipe, Janie Geiser has built a trove of beguiling short films. This program highlights works completed over the last seven years, including *Silent Sister* (2016) and two films from 2018: *Fluorescent Girl* and *Valeria Street*. In the former, a light reflects on a girl's image while looking at a book of photographs by Paul Strand in a New Hampshire bookstore. And in *Valeria Street*, "American industry, its efficiency and promise, encapsulated as the 'American way of life' emerges as a mirage. The melancholy of such a transformation, the visual degradation or alternation of the image, its shadowing, or haunting, is heightened by the repetition of the father figure — the face, the amplified male hands, a displacement and disfiguration of the sturdy, authorial body" — Ela Bittencourt. (Total running time 72 minutes)





Samuel J. Woolf, *Walt Whitman*

## Walt Whitman Bicentennial

May 18

In honor of Walt Whitman's 200th birthday the Gallery is pleased to showcase two films featuring texts penned by the famous American bard. This event is presented in association with PostClassical Ensemble. Following the screenings, Whitman scholars, noted music historians, and others comment on the films and on his prose and poetry.

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### Manhatta

Sat May 18 (2:00)



Artist Charles Sheeler and photographer Paul Strand's short filmic ode to the modernity of New York City at the onset of the twentieth century features intertitles derived from Walt Whitman's "Manhatta," part of his *Leaves of Grass*. Shots of New York's sidewalks, skyscrapers, machine-age marvels, and human masses coalesce in rhythmic repetition forming a lyrical visual symphony. (Charles Sheeler and Paul Strand, 1921, 11 minutes)

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### Street Scene

Sat May 18 (2:30)

Kurt Weill's 1946 musical theater piece (which opened on Broadway in 1947) was based on the 1929 Elmer Rice play *Street Scene* and features lyrics by Rice and Langston Hughes with a Whitman-derived love duet. This version was directed by Francesca Zambello for the Houston Grand Opera in the 1990s. Set during the depression of the 1930s, the action takes place outside a New York tenement block on an oppressively hot summer day and was, arguably, the principal triumph of Weill's career in America. "A true musical melting pot that aptly underlines the rich variety of characters that populate New York City in the 1930s" — Kevin Filipksi. (1995, 142 minutes)

# The Arboretum Cycle of Nathaniel Dorsky

May 25

*The Arboretum Cycle* is a sequence of seven related 16mm films (silent, projected at a speed of 18 frames per second) by Nathaniel Dorsky, an American artist who refers to his practice as devotional cinema — alluding to the latent capacity for non-representational film to elicit a mystical experience. Recorded on 16mm over the course of several months in the San Francisco Arboretum, these seven films embrace the intricacies of the natural world — from plants and flowers, earth and sky, to light and color, death and dying — with attention to the smaller details often lost in casual viewings. “Within walking distance from my apartment is San Francisco’s Arboretum located in Golden Gate Park. I decided that I would make a film on a single subject, and that subject would be the light — the sacredness of the light itself in this splendid garden” — Nathaniel Dorsky. The program is presented in association with the Environmental Film Festival.

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**Elohim, Abaton, Coda, Ode, September, Monody,  
and Epilogue**

Sat May 25 (2:30)



“The first film in the cycle, *Elohim* was photographed in early spring, the week of the lunar new year, the very spirit of creation. *Elohim*, or divine beings, the energy of light as creation” — Nathaniel Dorsky. (2017, 16mm, silent, 31 minutes)



"*Abaton* was photographed a few weeks later in the full ripeness of spring, the very purity and intoxication of passion. *Abaton*, a sacred place, a sanctuary for dreaming and healing" — N.D. (2017, 16mm, silent, 19 minutes)

"*Coda* was photographed in late spring, in the aftermath of this purity, the first shades of mortality and knowledge. *Coda* is an afterword to *Elohim* and *Abaton*, the first shades of death and knowing" — N.D. (2017, 16mm, silent, 16 minutes)

"*Ode*, photographed in early summer, is a soft textured song of the fallen, the dissonant reds of death, seeds, and rebirth. *Ode* is the fourth section of the cycle. There is now the presence of death and dying as the dry summer begins" — N.D. (2017, 16mm, silent, 20 minutes)

"*September* is indeed Indian summer, the halcyon swan song of earthly blessings. *September's* ripeness, a blessing on earth, our Indian summer" — N.D. (2017, 16mm, silent, 20 minutes)

"*Monody*, shot in the fading autumnal glory is an energized declaration of the end. A monody is an ode sung by a single actor in a Greek tragedy, a poem lamenting a person's death. In this case, the sixth section of this *Arboretum Cycle*, the death of the garden itself — N.D. (2017, 16mm, silent, 16 minutes)

"*Epilogue*, photographed in early December, rests in quietude, the garden's energy now descending into the dark, damp earth — N.D. (2017, 16mm, silent, 15 minutes)

(Total running time 137 minutes)





## Roberto Rossellini: The War Trilogy May 25 – 27

Roberto Rossellini's films of the 1940s, *Roma, città aperta*, *Paisà*, and *Germania anno zero* — now generally referred to as a trilogy based on the Second World War — took audiences and critics by surprise. The Italian movie industry was completely devastated during the war. Casts, crews, and film stock were hard to find, but Rossellini, who had once made movies for Mussolini, wanted to push forward with a new project. His shooting started even before the Nazi occupiers had left. Using makeshift sets and virtually no budget to craft a narrative tale under severe conditions; incorporating newsreel footage and rough camera work; employing ordinary people as players — all were deemed radical gestures. Ultimately, Rossellini's efforts supported the new, forceful, and influential postwar style, Italian neorealism.

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### Rome, Open City

Sat May 25 (12:00)



A chronicle of resistance set during the occupation, *Rome, Open City* (the title is taken from Rome's status as an "open city" as of August 14, 1943) centers around a group of ordinary Romans who work together during the early months of 1944 to protect a fugitive antifascist leader from capture. Anna Magnani, one of the few professionals in the cast, is the film's moral core and archetypal earth mother set to marry a resistance fighter after losing her first husband to the fascists. Steeped in the miseries and passions brought on by long-endured distress, the film (cowritten by Rossellini with



Federico Fellini and Sergio Amidei) was hastily funded and crudely shot, not necessarily for stylistic reasons, though this style proved to be an advantage for the film's ultimate neorealist reputation. (Roberto Rossellini, 1945, subtitles, 105 minutes)

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### **Paisan**

Mon May 27 (12:30)



In a cycle of six chapters, *Paisan* tracks the progress of the Allies during the Italian Campaign, from the invasion of Sicily to crossing the Po River. The central motif — crushing struggles with poor communication and response — is sensitively played out despite the film's rough-edged production. *Paisan* was widely seen at the time, and was later nominated for an Academy Award for original screenplay and for a BAFTA Award for best film of 1946. In Italy it proved to be the most popular new film of the 1945–1946 season. “The film is shot through with flashes of moral illumination and mutual understanding, fleeting moments of connection and compassion” — Nelson Kim. (Roberto Rossellini, 1946, subtitles, 134 minutes) *Special thanks to Fondazione Cineteca di Bologna for loan of the restored digital print.*

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### **Germany, Year Zero**

Mon May 27 (3:30)

The final installment in the trilogy, *Germany, Year Zero* takes place in Berlin, where Rossellini shot on location to create a sense of hard realities encircling the devastated and defeated German nation. Graphic images of a bombed-out capital and a sympathetic portrait of the shattered lives of the children, symbolize the intense struggle for survival. “A vehemently subjective vision, the junction of Italian neorealism and German expressionism” — Fernando F. Croce. (Roberto Rossellini, 1948, subtitles, 78 minutes) *Special thanks to Film Forum and to Cinecittà Luce.*





## Reinventing Realism: New Cinema from Romania

Jun 1 – 16

Since the late 1990s a group of intellectually adventurous filmmakers from Romania has been enlivening the European art scene with a steady stream of robustly realistic films that tackle moral and ethical issues, and make thought-provoking parables from everyday events. At the same time these filmmakers, working collaboratively, have set up a discourse about contemporary societal and civil issues that hover over Europe. This series is the last in a cycle of three retrospectives at the National Gallery of Art to focus on Romania's New Wave — earlier installments took place in 2007 and 2017. The Gallery wishes to thank the Embassy of Romania and the Romanian Cultural Institute for their partnership.

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### Alice T.

Sat Jun 1 (2:00)



Directed by Radu Muntean from a script by Muntean, Răzvan Rădulescu, and Alexandru Baciu, *Alice T.* is both a drama of family dysfunction and a dazzling coming-of-age tale centered on a rebellious teenage heroine played with narcissistic flair by first-time actress Andra Guți. While the core of the story centers on a relationship between Alice, her adoptive mother Bogdana, and Alice's unborn baby, in the end what emerges is a subtle study of a young person's troubled attempts to negotiate a perplexing adult society. "The finale comes as a fait accompli leaving Alice just as bewildered and lost as she must have felt back in the orphanage, and even less sure of herself than she was at the start. This is a drama that will make

your blood boil" — Meredith Taylor. (Radu Muntean, 2018, subtitles, 105 minutes)

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### Infinite Football

Sat Jun 1 (4:30)



The focus of Corneliu Porumboiu's quirkily droll documentary is his childhood friend Laurentiu Ginghină, a government functionary by day who spends his free time campaigning to reorganize the rules of soccer to (in his view) vastly improve the game. Although his dreams of becoming a player are long gone, Laurentiu has the passion of the hobbyist and his arguments seem craftily convincing. For Porumboiu, arguably the wittiest of the original Romanian New Wave directors, the goal was something larger — he invokes the experience of repression, and even the anguish of life itself. "Laurentiu is taking on this impossible dream just to do it; Porumboiu is documenting it for the same reason. Their intent and artistry makes for fascinating teamwork" — Roger Ebert. (Corneliu Porumboiu, 2018, subtitles, 70 minutes)

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### One Step Behind the Seraphim

Sun Jun 2 (4:00)



Set within a Romanian Orthodox seminary, *One Step Behind the Seraphim* tells a coming-of-age tale about a principled priest (Stefan Iancu) who for the first time in his young life encounters the dark corruption of the material world, largely in the person of the two-faced Father Ivan (Vlad Ivanov). Gabriel discovers that Father Ivan is an amiable con artist engaged in malicious power plays to advance his own aims. Director Daniel Sandu based his story on his own early experience within a similar seminary. Interestingly, his portrayal of abusive boarding school regimens recalls similar

treatments found in Jean Vigo's classic *Zéro de conduite* (1933) and Lindsay Anderson's *If....* (1968). "Religion plays very little part here as it's been smothered by the organized Church, and Sandu is clearly bitter at an institution that corrupts those with genuine faith and a sense of their calling" — Jay Weissberg. (Daniel Sandu, 2018, subtitles, 147 minutes)

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### Marita

Sat Jun 8 (2:00)

On a road trip from Transylvania to Moldova in a Dacia (Romanian car) affectionately dubbed "Marita," thirty-something Costi and his father Sandu (the veteran actor Alexandru Potocean), recall experiences from their distant past, memories that involve Sandu's first wife and Costi's mother, while traveling along in beautiful snow-capped scenery toward a family reunion. Now hardly more than a wreck, the aging Marita requires fine-tuning at nearly every pit stop. But when the car is back on the road, she seems to have oddly curative powers that stimulate memory and playfulness, as father and son travel along their precarious track through Romanian mountains. (Cristi Iftime, 2017, subtitles, 100 minutes)

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### Pororoca

Sun Jun 9 (4:00)



*Pororoca* is the third feature from director Constantin Popescu, recently established as a key younger artist of the ongoing Romanian New Wave. Popescu's film is a tense and intelligent thriller, an unusual genre choice for the normally low-key climate of Romanian cinema. At the center is a young father (Bogdan Dumitrache) of a middle-class family, recently devastated by the disappearance of their daughter in a public park. The term *pororoca* itself refers to



the sort of rough tidal bore that occurs at the mouth of the Amazon River, a wave so powerful that it typically is dubbed “the destroyer.” (Constantin Popescu, 2018, subtitles, 152 minutes)

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### Charleston

Sat Jun 15 (2:00)

The *humour noir* that occasionally appears in earlier films of the Romanian New Wave resurfaces in *Charleston* — an unconventional love triangle in which the shared object of affection is dead. Several weeks after his wife is fatally hit by a car, a man is visited by her former lover, a timid younger man emotionally undone by the loss. At first defensive, the two men eventually bond in a weird and wry exploration of their shared sensitivities and cravings for closure. “Like the old-fashioned dance from which it takes its name — in which one of the rules, as director Andrei Crețulescu slyly notes, is that you have to switch partners, *Charleston* pulls off its own brisk two-step as it dances between genres. ‘Some people called it a road movie. Some people called it black comedy,’ says Crețulescu, ‘but it is a film about love’” — Christopher Vourlias. (Andrei Crețulescu, 2018, subtitles, 120 minutes)

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### Moromete Family: On the Edge of Time

Sun Jun 16 (4:00)



The continuation of *The Moromete Family* — a film based on novelist Marin Preda's celebrated sagas and originally released just before the 1989 Romanian Revolution — *Moromete Family: On the Edge of Time* resumes Preda's intricate tale charting the insular existence of this extended peasant family. Partly portraying communism's incursions into the countryside and the strong peasant sensibilities deeply moored in Romanian culture, the main focus is the continual progression of the Morometes with the onset of father Ilie's old age and his complicated relationship with his son Niculae, now a budding writer. The post-World War II rural backdrop is beautifully captured in Vivi Dragan Vasile's lush and painterly black-and-white landscape shots and medium close-ups. (Stere Gulea, 2018, subtitles, 120 minutes)







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#### Cover

Radu Muntean, *Alice T.*, 2018 p41



National  
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Film



Spring 19



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